

Enclosure 1

Draft

Purpose of Interagency Working Group on
Transition to Federal ADP Standards

1. Purpose:

Provide planning guidance in making the transition to the use of Federal ADP Standards in computers and related equipment brought into the Federal Government inventory.

2. Background:

The Standard Code (USA Standard Code for Information Interchange - X3.4-1967) approved by the President was first adopted as a USA Standard in 1963. It has been twice revised largely for conformity with the 7-bit international standard code being processed in the ISO and CCITT standards bodies.

The ASCII code and perforated tape implementation (USA Standard Perforated Tape Code for Information Interchange - X3.6-1965) are becoming widely used in communications and terminal devices for data communications. Computer systems are now appearing which make use of ASCII, extended to 8-bits with the E_8 = zero convention established for magnetic tape recording by the USA Standard Recorded Magnetic Tape for Information Interchange 800 CPI, NRZI (X3.22-1967).

A number of Government, national and international groups are developing application plans for information interchange which are based on the use of these standards.

The user contemplating procurement of new computers and related equipment as replacement of older equipment is presented with transition problems of major significance for such reasons as:

- a. The introduction of computers and related equipment which use, or can use, a larger character set than commonly available in the past.
- b. The general break in program compatibility between the 6-bit older computers and the newer 8-bit computers.
- c. The use of media techniques of direct access which often leads to data system redesign and reprogramming.

-2-

3. Work Program:

The work program will be directed to:

- a. Identifying specific major problems users face in converting to the use of Federal ADP standards.
- b. Assistance in determining or recommending compatibility objectives that ADP systems should satisfy when converted to the use of Federal standards, including identification of additional standards, if any, that should be in the standards development program.
- c. Making the work and experience of installations that have made conversion available to other users.
- d. Provide a general forum for communications between Federal Government users on the one hand and vendors on the other hand with respect to the conversion to, and use of, Federal ADP standards in the vendor's systems and equipment.